

thePlanner

A NEWSLETTER OF THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT

October 1 - December 31, 2020



Published by:

Planning Division
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197 - 00100
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254-20-3318262
VOIP: 3012, 3080
reg-planning@uonbi.ac.ke
<https://planning.uonbi.ac.ke/>

©Planning Division, 2020

All rights reserved

Editor:

Mr. Bernard D. Njuguna

Sub-Editor:

Annemarie Mahaga

Contributors:

Bernard D. Njuguna
Annemarie Mahaga
Mercy Macharia
Patricia Kitili
Elizabeth Wamugunda
Evans Kagere

Design and Layout:

Mercy W. Macharia
Elizabeth Wamugunda

Publisher:

Planning Division
University of Nairobi

Our Vision

A world-Class University committed to scholarly excellence

Our Mission

To provide quality university education and training and to embody the aspirations of the Kenyan people and the global community through the creation, preservation, integration, transmission and utilization of knowledge

Our Slogan

Leading with excellence

Our Core Values

- a) **Freedom of thought and expression:** We shall promote and defend freedom of thought and expression in all our academic inquiry and activities.
- b) **Innovativeness:** We shall be innovative in meeting our mission.
- c) **Commitment:** We are committed to the mission of the university and always act in the best interests of the university.
- d) **Trust:** We trust the good intentions of others, view conflicts as positive and resolve them creatively and effectively to meet the vision and mission of the university.
- e) **Care:** We foster a leadership culture that cares, is people-focused, that connects and is responsive to the needs of internal and external customers, and that promotes stewardship over university resources.
- f) **Teamwork:** We work together as a team to realise the collective results that the university wishes to achieve.

From the Editor

It is time to welcome you once again to read *The Planner*.

This is yet another edition of the *The Planner*, a newsletter of the Planning Department of the University of Nairobi. In this issue we highlight some of the activities of the second quarter of the FY 2020/2021.

The Newsletter underscores our achievements during the last one quarter, amidst very tough environment caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. We are glad to note that the Planning Department managed to organize the 64th Graduation Ceremony albeit virtually and UoN@50 Celebrations.

Read about how the University continue braveing through the Pandemic's tough times. Also in this issue, we cover UoN as a quinquagenarian University and two alumni phiranthropic act of sponsorship.

Enjoy reading!



64th Graduation Ceremony



The Chief Administrative Secretary, Ministry of Education, Mr. Zack Kinuthia addressing audience during the 64th Graduation Ceremony held on December 25, 2020

December 11, 2020, at the Great Court, Main Campus marked yet another milestone for the University of Nairobi. It was the day the University held its 64th Graduation Ceremony, the second virtual graduation ceremony, inline with the Covid-19 Pandemic protocols and guidelines.

The University conferred two honorary degrees to Prof. Julia Ojiambo, Chair of Council, and Prof. Micere Mugo. The two eminent persons received the prestigious award bringing the number of honorary degree holders of the University of Nairobi to 35.

Prof. Ojiambo was awarded a Doctor of Science (Honoris Causa) in Leadership in recognition of her distinguished and exemplary career in leadership which has helped shape the face of leadership and politics in Kenya. Prof. Mugo was awarded a Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) In Literature, virtually, in recognition of her outstanding achievements and contribution to scholarship in literature and the arts, her relentless pursuit of a socially just world, and her broader service to humanity.

The Chancellor, Dr. Rattansi noted that the two took the less traveled road that though diverged somewhere

in the woods, earned each the pride of place as towering colossi within our borders and beyond. She took pride in her association with these two inspiring women of our time, women who continued to wear the virtue of humility with honor and personify modesty despite all their achievements.

On her part, Prof. Ojiambo accepted the honors saying that it was a great honor to have been invited to partake in this age-old tradition.



The Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi confer the Doctor of Science in Leadership Honorary Degree to the Council Chair, Prof. Julia Ojiambo

She concurred with the late founding father of the nation and inaugural UoN Chancellor the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta likening a graduation to a passing out parade. She further noted that the graduates leave the university fully trained and equipped in various disciplines, but the real test of proving oneself in the battleground of nation-building yet to come. If one is to make a mark in the world, then of



Prof. Micere Mugo addressing virtual congregant during her conferment of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) in Literature Honorary Degree ceremony

necessity is a need for teamwork, self-discipline, respect for self and others, realism, and in varying measures, the innocence of a dove and the proverbial shrewdness of a serpent, she emphasized.

Prof. Micere Mugo in her acceptance speech, she said the the honour was a homecoming from her previous graduation from the the University of Nairobi in 1967 and subsequent forced exile later in 1980. She was grateful that she came back as an honourable and not as untouchable as they were referred then.

Prof. promised to put the honour to good use even though she didnt have literal classroom, she appreciated the larger societal class. She said she would demonstrate that the academic knowledge should benefit not only the individual but should be placed at the service of fellow human beings.

"... until we humanize knowledge by applying it to transform ourselves and the oppressive realities, all our degrees will be worthless monuments for self gratification and glorification. Without Utu, knowledge is abstraction."

She said she would use her newly acquired Doctorate to remind herself and others that the purpose of knowledge is to solve problems facing humankind especially the vulnerable and less fortunate. She said she would use it to, "challenge myself and others that until we humanize knowledge by applying it to transform ourselves and the oppressive realities, all our degrees will be worthless monuments for self gratification and glorification. Without *Utu*, knowledge is abstraction."

She emphasized that, knowledge should not only have a mind and an intellect, but a heart and soul. It should should have *Utu - Ubuntu*.

The Vice-chancellor, Prof. Stephen Kiama congratulated all graduands of the class of 2020 for completing their studies on time despite the negative effects of Covid-19. He saluted the faculty for making frantic efforts to ensure that all students who had completed their studies were allowed to graduate.

The VC noted that the 64th graduation ceremony was a historic one as it coincided with the golden jubilee celebrations occurring when celebrating fifty years of academic excellence. It marked the end of an era and the beginning of a newer chapter for the University – a chapter on relevance, vibrancy, and sustainability. He said it was his vision and that of the stakeholders to join efforts in building a world-class institution that is well resourced and impacts the community through research outputs and community service.

The Chief Administrative Secretary, Ministry of Education, Zack Kinuthia, on his part, commended the University management for moving with speed to ensure minimal interruption of the academic calendar despite the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that the use of technology was no longer an alternative, but a vital way of doing business, including education.

Moreover, a record 5,709 graduands were conferred with degrees and awarded diplomas at the 64th graduation ceremony. These were 66 Doctor of Philosophy degree awards, 2 fellowship awards, 1,206 master degree awards, 69 postgraduate diploma awards, 4,018 bachelor degree awards, and 348 diploma awards.

Congratulations graduating class of 2020!

UoN as a Quinquagenarian University

By Mercy Macharia

In 2020, the University of Nairobi celebrates 50 years since it was transformed into a university, the first national university in Kenya on July 1, 1970.

In 1947 the Kenya Government drew up a plan to establish a technical and commercial institute in Nairobi. By 1949, this plan had grown into an East African concept aimed at

providing higher technical education for the region.

In 1951, the Royal Technical College of East Africa was awarded a Royal Charter and the foundation stone of the College was laid in 1952. During the same period, the Asian Community of East Africa was also planning to build a College for Arts, Science, and



The first UoN Chancellor, late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, during the first graduation ceremony held on Thursday 10, December, 1970 at the Great Court

Commerce as a commemoration to Mahatma Gandhi. To avoid duplication of efforts, Gandhi Memorial Academy Society agreed to merge its interests with those of the East African Governments. Hence, the Gandhi Memorial Academy was incorporated into

the Royal Technical College of East Africa in April 1954, and the College proceeded to open its doors to the first intake of students in April 1956.

In 1961, by an Act of the East African High Commission, the College became the second

University College in East Africa, under the name Royal College Nairobi which later in 1964 was renamed University College, Nairobi. The rigorous task of reorganizing the technical college into a university college was tasked to Dr. J.M. Hyslop who was the Principal and under whom the College was admitted to Special Relation with the University of London.

On the attainment of "University College" status, the institution prepared students for bachelor's degrees awarded by the University of London, while also continuing to offer college diploma programs.

In 1966, the University College Nairobi began preparing students exclusively for degrees of the University of East Africa, except for the Department of Domestic Science.

From July 1, 1970, the University of East Africa was dissolved and the three East African countries set up their national



The Chancellor, Dr. Vijoo Rattansi, during the virtual 64th graduation ceremony held on Friday 11, December, 2020 at the Great Court

Universities. This development saw the birth of the University of Nairobi set up by an Act of Parliament.

Since its transformation in 1970, the University of Nairobi has seen many inventions and innovations, which have contributed to its development and that of the nation. It has grown from a faculty-based university with a student population of 2,768 to a college focused university serving over 65,000, currently.

Currently, the University offers a wide range of academic programs in its six colleges spread over 10 campuses in which there are 29 faculties, schools, and institutes.

As a whole, the University has maintained a leadership position nationally, regionally, and globally. Its score in the government performance contract evaluation has been consistently rated as excellent, and its position in the global Webometrics ranking has continually been impressive.



The Vice-Chancellor cut the @50 celebrations cake; looking on is the Chancellor, Chair of the Council, and DVCs RIE and FPD

Alumni Return with a Basketful of Goodies

Two prominent 1970 medical students came back to their alma mater, the University of Nairobi with a Sh6 million scholarship offer for five bright but needy students. The two doctors represented their 1970 medical class. The scholarship

starting in 2021 would benefit selected students every year.

Cardiologist Betty Gikonyo and psychiatrist Frank Njenga graduated from the UoN's School of Medicine in 1975, 45 years ago.



The Vice-Chancellor, Dr Frank Njenga, and Dr Betty Gikonyo

The two recounted how July 4, 1970 would forever remain etched in their mind for it was the date that they enrolled in the School of Medicine. As the septuagenarian recollected fondly about the University that built their childhood dreams and molded them into what they are today.

For Dr. Gikonyo, the Karen Hospital co-founder and CEO, the memories go deeper, for this is the place that presented her-to-be husband, Dr. Daniel Gikonyo, while in her second year. Three years later, they wedded at the School. Where they had their photoshoot at the School garden and catering services were

provided at the school cafeteria. She recounted the details of the Sh700 budget wedding, which the couple had to pay in installments.

She further noted that the marriage did not impede her professional success as she knew how to balance her personal life and education. In 1975, Gikonyo graduated with MBCHB and after her internship in Nakuru, returned to the UoN for a Master's in Paediatrics.

On his part, Dr. Njenga apologized for leading strikes at the University. He said he was young and failed to look at other avenues of redressing issues. He noted that he had a misguided energy of youth, and raised the flag of freedom, leading at least two strikes. Fifty years later, he came to seek forgiveness.

Dr. Njenga, a psychiatrist consultant who runs, Chiromo Lane Medical Centre, advised the University leadership to adopt better ways of managing the youths.

He encouraged students to work diligently and persistently to reap the promise of consistency. Consistency is always rewarded, he noted.

The two stated that they have kept together as they provide social capital developed from years of knowing each other.

They also spoke about the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and reiterated the need to follow government directives. They noted that the pandemic might affect mental health but the most important thing to remember, he emphasized was that nothing is permanent.

Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peter Kiama, who received the scholarship, lauded the two medics and encouraged other alumni to come back and support the University.

He was grateful for the solid foundation the two medics had laid in the alumni and the exemplary leadership they continued to inspire and impact to the Alumni Association. The two are founding members of the University of Nairobi Alumni Association which was formed in 2005 with Dr. Gikonyo as the founding Chair.



Dr Frank Njenga, Dr Betty Gikonyo, The Vice-Chancellor, and Prof. Julius Qgeng'o, DVC (AA)



Planning Division
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197 - 00100
Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254-20-3318262
VOIP: 3012, 3080
reg-planning@uonbi.ac.ke
<https://planning.uonbi.ac.ke/>